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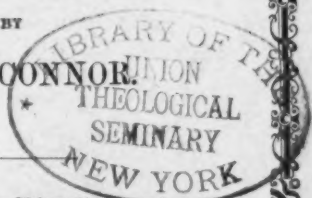
No. 5.

THE CONVERTED CATHOLIC.

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

EDITED BY

FATHER O'CONNOR.



I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by born of the Virgin Mary, suffered Pilate, was crucified; the third day the dead; he heaven, and sitteth of God the Father thence he shall quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting, Amen.



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EDITORIAL NOTE.

To extend the work of the Reformed Catholic Church wisely, holding every inch of ground where we raised our banner, has been our object since we entered on this work of evangelizing the Roman Catholics. By making haste slowly we have been able to overcome the indiscreet zeal and lack of experience of some of the brethren who were the first to come out of Rome when the fullness of time was come for a work of this nature. We hope to take another step in advance before many weeks which, under God's guidance, will enable us to put some of our brethren to work as home missionaries among the Roman Catholics in New York and other large cities. As the experience of the last five years demonstrates, converted Catholics, when their lives are holy, the fruit and evidence of regeneration through the blood of Christ, make the best missionaries to their brethren who are still in the bondage of Rome. We can but glance at this important subject this month. We ask the prayers of all the readers of the CONVERTED CATHOLIC that the Lord our God in whom we trust may guide, direct and help us in this field of labor. The statistics of the Irish Roman Catholic element in the first article of this number will show how much such a work is needed.





The Converted Catholic.

MARCH, 1884.

THE IRISH ELEMENT IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Monsignor Capel, the "English Cawtholic," as he proclaims himself, though his parents were Irish, has nearly completed his American tour, which was undertaken in the interests of Rome, and is now delivering his farewell lectures. He has utterly failed to gain a single proselyte for the Pope, and is bitterly disappointed at the result of his year's labor. Having failed to "convert" wealthy Americans to Popery he is now blarneying the Irish Roman Catholic laborers and servant girls, like the Dynamiters and Land Leaguers, though in a different manner, to rob them of some of their hard-earned wages.

One of his recent statements is worthy of attention, because the facts bear witness to its truth: "If the Irish element were eliminated from the Roman Catholic Church in English-speaking countries, as America, England, Scotland, Australia, and Ireland, nine-tenths of its numerical strength in those countries would disappear." A glance at the Roman Catholic directories will show the truth of this. If the people be like the priests, the nationality of the latter will indicate that of the former; and a majority of these are Irish, as appears from their names in the "Catholic Directory" for 1884, which gives the following statistics :

Leo XIII. (Vincent Joachim Pecci), the present Pope, claims to be the two hundred and fifty-eighth successor of St. Peter, and is recognized by all Roman Catholics as the head of their Church. Under his jurisdiction are: 59 Cardinals, 12 Patriarchs of the Latin and Oriental Rite, 176 Archbishops and 716 Bishops. In the United States there are: 1 Cardinal, 15 Archbishops, 63 Bishops, 6,833 Priests, and a Roman Catholic population of 6,482,396.

In this latter estimate are included all the members of each family, and even the children of what are called "mixed marriages," that is, where only one of the parents is a Roman Catholic.

A well organized corps of monks and friars, and 30,000 nuns, or "sisters," as they are called, the best disciplined army in all the world, must be added to the working force of the Church.

In the Arch-diocese of New York, which includes the City of New York and reaches into the State as far as Poughkeepsie, there are 2 Archbishops, 383 Priests (118 of whom are members of "religious orders," Jesuits, etc.), 173 churches, 54 chapels, 38 stations without churches, 76 ecclesiastical students (21 of them in Rome), 254 monks and friars (brothers), 1,701 nuns (sisters), 1 theological seminary, 4 colleges in which there are 1,085 students, 6 academies for boys with 676 students, 22 young ladies' academies with 2,316 students (many of them the children of foolish Protestants who have more money than religion), 55 parochial schools for boys with 15,583 students, 60 parochial schools for girls with 19,255 students, *10 orphanage schools with 2,047 inmates, *10 industrial and reform schools with 5,300 inmates, *10 orphan asylums with

2,147 inmates, *10 homes for destitute or wayward children with 5,504 inmates, *10 hospitals of various kinds with 2,633 inmates, *3 homes for the aged with 682 inmates, 43 conferences of St. Vincent de Paul with 1,039 members, and a Roman Catholic population of 600,000.

In Philadelphia there are: 1 archbishop, 260 priests, 35 priests in colleges, etc., and 64 belonging to "religious orders," 99 ecclesiastical students, 13 orders of women, in which are 1,020 nuns, 26 female academies in which are 2,100 students (many of them Protestants), 39 parochial schools containing 22,000 pupils, and a Roman Catholic population of 300,000.

In Chicago: 1 archbishop, 236 priests, 31 ecclesiastical students, 18 academies for young ladies, 24 convents, 26,000 children in parochial schools, and a Roman Catholic population of 255,000.

In Boston: 1 archbishop, 300 priests, 4 female academies for young ladies, 17 convents, 40 parochial schools, and a Roman Catholic population of 320,000.

In Baltimore: 1 archbishop, 269 priests, 28 male religious institutions, 30 female institutions, 19 female academies, 8 female colleges, 86 parochial schools in which are 14,000 children, and a Roman Catholic population of 210,000.

In San Francisco: 2 archbishops, 175 priests, 6 colleges, 18 academies, and a Roman Catholic population of 200,000.

In St. Louis: 1 archbishop, 243 priests, 40 ecclesiastical students, 15 academies for young ladies, 88 parochial schools in which are 23,527 children, and a Roman Catholic population of 196,000.

*Supported by Municipal and State taxation, 90 per cent. of which is paid by Protestants.

In Cincinnati: 1 archbishop, 214 priests, 8 academies for young ladies, 89 parochial schools containing 20,709 children, and a Roman Catholic population of 180,000.

In Milwaukee: 1 archbishop, 199 priests, 12 religious communities, and a Roman Catholic population of 210,000.

In New Orleans: 1 archbishop, 1 bishop, 162 priests, 34 convents in which are 360 nuns, and a Roman Catholic population of 250,000.

In Cleveland: 1 bishop, 179 priests, 22 convents and a Roman Catholic population of 165,000.

In Pittsburgh Pa.: 1 bishop, 189 priests, 8 monasteries, with 130 inmates, 37 convents with 526 nuns, and a Roman Catholic population of 150,000.

In Brooklyn, N. Y.: 1 bishop, 156 priests, and a Roman Catholic population of 205,000.

In Newark, N. J.: 1 bishop, 150 priests, 30 ecclesiastical students in seminaries, 8 convents, 17 academies for young ladies, 62 parochial schools containing 20,000 children, and a Roman Catholic population of 150,000. So much for the chief cities. In the smaller cities and towns of the United States the same proportion exists, as in Albany (N. Y.) diocese, where there are 191 priests, and 160,000 Roman Catholics; Buffalo, 176 priests, and 100,000 Roman Catholics.

In Ireland there are: 1 cardinal, 4 archbishops, 25 bishops and 3,678 priests.

In England: 2 cardinals (Manning and Newman, who were Protestant Episcopal clergymen), 2 archbishops, 18 bishops and 2,078 priests.

In Scotland: 2 archbishops, 4 bishops, 312 priests and a Roman Catholic population of 258,000.

In Canada: 6 archbishops, 29 bishops, 2,123 priests, and a Roman Catholic population of 2,287,391.

With the exception of New Orleans and Canada, where there are many French Roman Catholics, the Irish element largely predominates in the Roman Catholic Church in America. Of the 227 churches and chapels in the arch-diocese of New York, only 10 are for Germans, 2 French, 1 Italian, 1 Bohemian, 1 Polish and 1 for the colored people. The names of the pastors, as they appear in the directory, indicate their Irish origin. Even the few American perverts whom Father Hecker has been able to bring around him in the Church of St. Paul on Ninth Avenue and Sixtieth Street can find no other congregation to minister to but an exclusively Irish one. Of the 600,000 Roman Catholics in the arch-diocese of New York, not more than 2,000 had American parents. When a Roman Catholic Irishman ran for Mayor of the city on the Democratic ticket in 1879, he received as a matter of course the entire vote of his co-religionists, and was elected by a bare majority of 2,000 in a vote of 200,000. There were no American Romanists to vote for him.

In the other large cities of the United States a similar state of things attests the strength and power of the Irish element in the Roman Catholic Church.

In Ireland itself there are, according to the census of 1881, only 3,750,000 Roman Catholics, and 1,500,000 in England. The Irish race is the last remaining hope of Rome. European nations have rejected Popery and are welcoming the Bible that has made England, Germany and America the leading forces in the world's progress. Let us do what we can to convert the Irish in America, and the end of the baneful influence of the Roman Catholic Church in this world is not far distant.

J. A. O'C.

AN ORDER TO THE CLERGY COMMANDING
THEM TO MARRY.

BY A CATHOLIC.

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?)

Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (First Epistle of Paul to Timothy, chap. i., vs. 1-13.)

The bishops in Paul's time were pastors of churches, and had rule, in connection with the elders, over the church only with which they were connected. The

deacons were their assistants, especially in the money matters of the church. They attended to its temporal concerns, while the bishops devoted their whole time to the spiritual welfare of their church and people.

Paul's injunction here is equal to a command. The bishop, or pastor, to avoid even the appearance of evil, should be the husband of one wife, and she a good one. So his assistants or under-helpers should equally vindicate the purity of the Gospel by being men of virtue, each having his own wife and raising his own family.

There is sound truth in the Apostle's reason for a bishop or pastor governing well his own family. "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" Or how can he realize God's fatherly love and care for his people, if he never had or can have a father's legitimate love and feelings in his own breast? The very fact that a good man is a father and deals wisely with his family leads him into many of the secrets of God's relationship to us, his erring children. He can then, and not till then, realize that "as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

The Roman Church when it forbade its bishops and priests to obey the divine command, and deprived them of this means of reaching and sympathizing with the hearts of men, committed an irreparable blunder. Its action in this case can be explained only by the proverb, "Whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad." For surely if anything can destroy the Church of God it is disobedience to God's plain command. This command, of all others, is directly in conformity with man's created natural instinct to "multiply and replenish the earth;" an instinct which asserts itself in spite of Rome

or even the individual will. Why should Rome war against God in forbidding that which he requires of us as a duty? By thus setting itself up as a god in the place of God, it robs its priests and nuns and the people generally of that purity, virtue and sacred family relations, and of that fatherly and motherly love which is the light and life of our race, and by means of which God reveals himself to us as a Father and a Friend.

The Mormon Church goes to one extreme in breaking this command by turning its houses into harems and setting forth heaven as a place of carnal lust. The Church of Rome goes to the other extreme in breaking this law by forbidding its priests and nuns to marry at all; thus necessitating them to fall into the exercise of all uncleanness; for the animal nature of man will assert itself in illegitimate acts when and where its legitimate sphere is denied.

Any one who thinks Rome has not erred or cannot err should study the writings of Paul and Peter, or Scripture generally, and give particular attention to such passages as the above, and others referring to the usurpation of the Godhead by the Pope of Rome. Such seekers for truth will be surprised to find no mention of purgatory, Papal infallibility, worship of saints, confession to a priest and many other things believed and practiced by the Roman Church, for which it has not the slightest Bible authority. But they will find several things commanded in the Scriptures, as the second commandment, etc., which Rome rejects in its teachings.

If our readers like the CONVERTED CATHOLIC, will not each one try to get us one or more new subscribers?

ST. PATRICK'S DAY OFFERING.

BY REV. J. F. MCNAMEE, PASTOR OF THE REFORMED
CATHOLIC CHURCH, BROOKLYN.

Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations.—DEUT. xxxii., 9.

The life of the man advanced in years must scarcely have been worth living, if, when bent upon the staff, he cannot recall some pleasant incidents of the good old days of yore. That wreck of humanity, whose very appearance stamps him as one standing upon the verge of a drunkard's grave, will oftentimes allow the tear to roll down the haggard cheek, as he thinks of the palmy days of childhood and youth; as he thinks of the salutary influences of Church and Sunday-school, before that companion, in an evil hour, introduced him to the bacchanalian gods. That murderer in his cell, or upon the gallows, may find a momentary solace, as his mind hastily travels back to the days of home and mother; and I would venture to assert that the oldest man or the oldest woman before me, no matter what their present condition in life may be, can look back to some scene, some association of the good old days gone by, and find pleasure therein.

But looking back to the old days does not always bring its fond recollections. It may bring forth a mixture of joy and sorrow. It may bring forth joy at the recollection of the happy home circle, when father and mother, brothers and sisters, basked in the sunshine of domestic felicity. It may bring forth a shade of sorrow or regret, at the recollection of rejected counsels of father and mother, whose parental hearts yearned for

the welfare of their child. Still we find something of the good old days gone by that is good and pleasing to think of.

In our text we find Moses in his exhortation to the people of Israel urging them to remember the days of old. How fitting this exhortation was to that people, and how applicable the same is to-day, we shall consider further on. Moses has already led the children of Israel to the foot of Sinai, that the covenant between them and their God may be made. The covenant was made, and Moses took great care to frame the covenanted law, received from God for his people Israel. This covenant begins by way of remembrance of the great things which God has done for them. He has brought them out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage, and then, as if to bind them closer to him their God and their deliverer, he gives unto them his law, which they must solemnly observe. As Moses' end draws nigh, he often bids farewell to the children of Israel, not that he was loath to go to God, but because he was loath to leave them, fearing lest when he was gone they would leave God.

Moses calls Joshua, encourages and admonishes him to be strong and of good courage as a leader. He ordains that one authentic copy of the law be laid up in the ark as a standard copy, and that it should be read to all Israel every seventh year, at the feast of Tabernacles.

Moses is told by God he must shortly die, and that after his demise the covenant he had taken so much pains to make, would be broken, and the people would forsake their God. Thus their apostacy was foretold. Then Moses addresses a solemn oration to Israel, in the which he sets forth God's mercy and vengeance. He

calls loudly upon them to remember the days of old, when God as their great benefactor showed in divers ways his mercy and providence toward them. He calls upon them to consider the years of many generations, when he was their God, and they his people, when no falling away had as yet taken place.

Ah! well might they later on recall that eloquent exhortation of Moses to their fathers, "Remember the days of old." In the days of their apostacy and captivity well might they cry, "Oh for the good old days of old, when Miriam sang

"Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea,
Jehovah hath triumphed; his people are free."

Well might the tear trickle down the furrowed cheek of the hoary-headed man in the chains of his Babylonian captivity, as he recalls the words of Moses, "Remember the days of old." Has the history of these ancient days lost its interest to us, because the new dispensation has changed the state of affairs? Truly we live in another age, and under another dispensation. I know we cannot live by the old, because the new has come, yet this incident and these facts have not lost their significance to me.

In this I discern a similitude of my own people and nation to-day, and as Moses said to the children of Israel in their coming captivity, "Remember the days of old," so also I feel justified in saying to the Irish people in America and at home, in their present captivity, "Let Erin remember the days of old, and consider the years of many generations." That is to say, let Erin remember the days of old, when the Lord was their God, and they his people, when Ireland was the land of the brave and the free, before they allowed themselves to be Roman-

ized—apostatized—accounting for the present Romish (Babylonian) captivity.

We read that in the early part of the Christian era there was a land little noticed because regarded as at the end of the earth. If it were not noticed much by men, it was noticed by God. God had his designs upon the people of this far-off land. How was he to mature these designs?

From the burning bush Moses was commissioned to lead forth the children of Israel.

When Paul slept at Troas on the margin of the sea, with the wild waves of the Mediterranean echoing their lullabys around the sleeping minister of Christ, the soul of Macedonia stood before him saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." In like manner we are told, a voice from the Irish people was wafted across the southern sea, and was heard by the holy missionary Patrick, saying, "Come and work amongst us."

We will leave for a moment Moses and his vocation among the Israelites, to dwell upon this similitude of the Irish nation. . . . We have now entered upon a very important period in the history of our nation and people, viz., the advent of Christianity into Ireland. We need hardly dwell on the time prior to the advent of Christianity into Ireland, when the cromlech formed the altar-stone, when the bards composed their war-songs and hymns to their idols, and when they drew forth the wild notes from the harp, whiling away the idle hours. Christianity was introduced into Ireland. We find Patricius, or Patrick, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ before the king; then going about from place to place preaching the same glorious Gospel, gaining many converts among the bards and rulers and the

common people, ordaining ministers, establishing churches throughout the land. Thus was our early Church firmly established, the Gospel standard erected, governed by one rule of faith and practice, namely, the "Holy Scriptures." God was their God, and they his people worshipped him in spirit and in truth. Upon such a basis the early Irish Church progressed. Her glory was seen in that wonderful stream of zealous missionaries who went forth in the sixth and seventh centuries to evangelize the barbarians of central Europe. It was seen in her seats of learning, from whose shady retreats went forth orators and learned men, carrying the standards of religion and literature into other nations.

We do not find a single authentic instance where the religion of the early Irish Church was derived from Rome. On the contrary, we find her frequently resisting the encroachments of Rome. Although the Church of Rome to-day dresses up the picture of St. Patrick with mitre, crozier and robes, yet it has no right to do anything of the kind. In his day the Roman Catholic Church, as it is to-day, did not exist. There were no confessional boxes then, as confession was not established as it is now until the year 1215. So also with transubstantiation and other erroneous doctrines peculiar to modern Romanism. From this and other proofs too numerous to mention here, we conclude that the early Irish Church was independent of Rome. Their form of worship was of the purest kind; the word of God was their guide, and Jesus their only spiritual head. Ah, but remember the days of old, for the glory of the Irish Church, her pure Christianity, is nearing the decline. The cromlech fell into disuse, and

the horrid rites of the fire-worshippers waned before Patrick with the sword of the spirit in hand; and now a period is reached when the standard of religion and religious progress is about to be supplanted by Romanism.

It is needless for me to dwell minutely upon the introduction of Romanism into Ireland. You are already aware of the events of the twelfth century, when the Roman eagle perched upon our round towers, and error after error crept in gradually, bringing the people within the "awful circle," until religious liberty was destroyed and superstition prevailed.

Here we may date the turning point in the history of our country. Here may be viewed the horizon behind which the bright sun of the early Church of Ireland and Ireland's freedom set; while Rome's dark clouds came rolling darker and denser over the Alps, veiling the splendor of Ireland's sky. Need we dwell upon the history of our unhappy country since that time when military force and Romish intrigue were employed to overpower and subdue our people?

Brethren: Ireland is in bondage to-day and trampled upon by Rome, but permit me to say, as long as they kept their first faith, they preserved their national and religious independence.

And now, brethren, when our harp is gone over to Rome, when our early Church is no more, when our national independence is no more, when religious freedom is no longer enjoyed, a voice is heard saying, "remember the days of old" when the people were free to worship God in spirit and in truth, when they bowed to no Pope or priest, save the great high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in a spiritual independence, I believe in a

national independence too, but I don't believe in regaining such by dynamite or agrarian outrage.

My dear Roman Catholic people, if you really desire freedom, break away from the Roman Church that destroyed your freedom. Let our Celtic tenacity be as firm in demanding the freedom, the literature, the purity of faith of the early Church, as we have been in our adhesion to an erroneous Church.

Give our people the Gospel that was preached by Patrick and the early missionaries.

Let us have once more our own old schools of literature, where the glorious truths of the Bible will be unravelled, quickening and enlightening the minds of our people. Oh, this blessed Book! this blessed educator! If it has lighted and guided nations on their march of progress; if the Bible has been the torch that originated the mighty fires of the reformation; if it is the pride of the American Christian and patriot that the Bible is the corner-stone of his nation, should not the noblest aspiration of our Irish hearts be, to have the Bible as the corner-stone of the land of our birth?

From a personal experience I can assure you that if you take the Bible as your guide, and study its sacred pages, you will find a great contrast existing between the noble ideas and sublime principles it imparts of God, Jesus, the present and future life, and the grovelling, imperfect, slavish principles of Romanism. Thank God, a brighter day seems about to dawn. Evangelical truth is beaming. I think the time is not far distant when the old days which we now are called upon to remember shall return to our country; when a full and true and pure Christianity shall renew the hearts and enlighten the minds of our people; and

then when they will allow the truth to make them free, they shall be free indeed.

We now preach unto you the glorious truth of the Son of God, and ask you to learn for yourselves the great doctrines of the Christian Church. We say to you, let no man deceive you. Let no man stand between you and your Saviour. Heed not that organization and system that boasts of a long standing, and of the gorgeousness of its ceremonies. But rather follow the lowly Nazarene who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." If then you will take Jesus as your only Priest, Saviour and Mediator, if you will take the Bible as your guide, soon the misty veil of error and spiritual bondage shall be lifted from off many eyes, and the lovely panorama painted by a master hand, will appear as beautiful as in the palmy days of its youthful beauty.

Oh then for the Gospel banner to be unfurled upon one common altar, to the living and true God, around which our people, Roman Catholics and Protestants, may kneel side by side! We long to see the night roll away and the twilight also. We long to hear the wild notes from the harp echo o'er mountain and valley, in accompaniment to the grand doxology sung, because the truth and purity of our early Church is restored. The people have broken away from the "scarlet woman of the seven hills," to enjoy the liberty of the children of God, acknowledging but one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. AMEN.

If Christians desire the conversion of some particular Roman Catholic acquaintance, no better book can be recommended, next to the Bible, than "FATHER O'CONNOR'S LETTERS TO CARDINAL McCLOSKEY."

OUT OF ROMANISM INTO CHRISTIANITY.

REV. JAMES H. KEELEY, PASTOR OF THE METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH, PUNXUTAWNEY, PA.

II.

I made my "first communion" in my twelfth year. This was not my first catechetical instruction, however, for that began years before. Those who watched over my childhood were diligent and blameless before the Church in this respect; and for the benefit of those who have said that I never knew anything about the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, I would say that before I became a catechumen in the parochial classes, formed by the pastor for instruction, I had committed to memory a larger catechism than the one now in use in most Roman Catholic churches. And then in preparation for the first communion I studied another catechism and passed examination in it successfully. I was hardly ever happy whilst preparing for this occasion; I had a wicked heart, and I knew it; I knew right better than I did right. A month before receiving the sacrament, a number of us went to confession, and again on the Saturday preceding the ceremony. I was taught that by so doing I would be put in the "state of grace;" but if there was any change, of which I was conscious, and to which I can testify, it was a feeling of greater condemnation; I felt that God was so displeased with me that there was no mercy for me. My second confession gave me no more peace, yet I felt I could do nothing but go on, which I did with many prayers and fears.

The day for my first communion arrived and I with

the other boys attended the mass for the occasion. That mass was filled with sad forebodings of the future. I advanced to the altar-rail, the priest put the wafer upon my tongue, and I felt sure I was eating it unworthily. I returned home believing I had made an unworthy communion. I reasoned thus: I know my sins are not forgiven, and my teaching has been, that all those who receive their "first communion" in the state of mortal sin are lost forever. I tried to be cheerful next day, but my anguish was inconceivable for one so young. Still I had hope. "Surely," I said to myself, "I can do something to make right this great wrong;" and so I determined to say the "rosary" every day for a month, and then go again to confession and tell the priest all my troubles. All this I did, except to tell the priest; I had not courage to do it, nor do I remember having told it to any one else. The effects of this experience on my mind were felt for years, sometimes driving me to mortifications and prayer, at other times goading me on to a sort of reckless despair, and to an audaciousness bold enough to contemplate any impiety, for I felt that I was numbered among the lost anyhow, and to do good was only to add to my eternal misery. Oh, the fearfulness of the thoughts that were the legitimate offspring of these years of moral gloom in my youth! Two years after my first communion I confessed my state of mind to a missionary priest, who consoled me by saying that all my previous communions were unworthy, and that I was lost; "but," said he, "I will pray for you." Here was an inconsistency that struck me forcibly. "What use are his prayers to me," said I, "if I am lost?" I was taught that prayers in this case would only add torment to my already

unbearable punishment, and the prayers of this priest, if he said them, caused me more misery than joy. Not long after this experience I, with many other young people, was confirmed by Tobias Mullen, Bishop of Erie. Some of the boys remarked on this occasion, that this "Confirmation was the great preparation" for the "descent of the Holy Ghost." I did not receive the Holy Ghost at that confirmation. The bishop went through the ceremony, and I submissively received what he professed to give, but found I was filled with the same ungodly mind and evil heart, even as before; I knew nothing of the mind that was in Christ.

It will be observed that thus far there was no religious peace or rest for me, such as is promised to those who confess their sins and receive the forgiveness of them; nor did I ever find any such peace while a devotee at the altars of the Church of Rome. Not that Rome has no truth; but she hides the great truth in her multitudinous forms and ceremonies, that salvation is by Jesus—by the grace that is within him, through faith that worketh by love. All that Pope and priest profess to do, Jesus has already done. I believed in the Church wherein I was brought up; I believed it was the only true Church, for I knew little of other Churches save that the Roman Church had pronounced them heretical.

At the age of fifteen I was thrown in contact with Protestants, and my highest ambition was to successfully defend what I had been taught by the Church of Rome. In my desire to get an education, one thing that buoyed me up in the midst of the seemingly insurmountable obstacles was, that I might be able to sweep from the field any one who would dare question the validity of the

claims and pretensions of the "only true Church." At the age of seventeen I renewed a resolution made many times before, to obtain an education in spite of many surrounding obstacles and discouragements. This resolution I have kept and purpose continuing in the same line while mortal energy is left my aspiring mind, and fields of truth are spread out from which to glean treasures that no gold can buy, no moth consume or rust destroy.

I am forced to say that I had not a single friend among my Roman Catholic acquaintances who urged me to obtain an education; and but very few who even wished me success after I had begun to study; while many Protestant acquaintances encouraged me on the road to knowledge. Nine years ago I went into the coal mines for several months, and there earned what was sufficient to pay for my first school term.

I was induced to go to a school that was under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with the learned Dr. J. T. Edwards at its head. I did not feel at home there and was continually in hot water. Once I thought of leaving it on account of a remark made by the principal's wife regarding the Huguenots, which remark I considered derogatory to the dignity and Christianity of the Roman Church. In spite of my prejudice (and it was greater than any one supposed), I always enjoyed Dr. Edwards' talks and lectures, and felt that notwithstanding his being a Protestant, he was a good man. I occasionally attended the various Protestant churches in town, and a few times went to the Methodist Episcopal Sabbath-school. I remember one occasion when the Sunday-school lesson was about the taking of Jericho, and I could not

see that they told the story differently from what I had read it in the Catholic history of the Bible, a copy of which I had bought when quite a boy. I never saw but one Catholic Bible until after I was converted, and then I bought one. The longer I lived within this Protestant influence the more I was compelled to respect it. Although I had no friendly feeling toward them, and went among them only for the purpose of advancing my own interests, yet my conscience bore witness that notwithstanding they were out of the "true Church," God verily did honor them, and they were a good people. I formed an intimate acquaintance with several students, and toward the close of my term, went with them to social religious meetings. At one of these meetings the Spirit of God moved my heart so mightily that I thought I would be unhappy if I did not rise and tell them I was sinful, and wanted to be good; but I could not summon up courage to do so, and I came home disturbed and troubled.

I began to teach school, but felt I was not yet qualified for such a position. Thirsting for knowledge, I read all the time, and sought the acquaintanceship of educated persons. A young man, S. T. Brockbank, now a lawyer, whose parents were Roman Catholics, but whose example he did not follow in this respect, became an intimate acquaintance of mine during my first school term. He lent me books and gave me good advice, and to him as much as to any other cause I owe the blessing of being freed from the bigotry and prejudice of which as a Roman Catholic I was a victim.

It would be a false impression if it be concluded that my love of study made me love godliness also. Such was not the case, and it was all the more unfortunate

for me, as I was daily losing faith in the Romish Church, without any other haven of safety in view. For two years my life was not an example worthy of imitation, and my influence worthless, save for evil. I went to church as many do, not to worship God, but to see and to be seen. The ceremonies of the Church became more and more empty shows. I felt that I improved my time more profitably in studying phrenologically the people who came to church, than in mumbling over the prayers at mass. I was honest in this, because I could see no profit in them, and it would be mockery for me to go over them.

During my first year's teaching I was almost wholly under Roman Catholic influence; and I must say this much for the family with whom I boarded, that they were Roman Catholics in the full sense of their belief; yet my respect for the Church declined daily.

Had I been thrown into a society where a high religious sentiment pervaded the atmosphere, I would doubtless have been saved before I was. But providentially it was otherwise. I went to Edinboro, Pa., to the State Normal School, intending to represent myself as a Roman Catholic, for I thought it manly to be something, and stick to it.

At this school I was thrown in contact with teachers, among whom were many skeptics, and even some infidels who cared nothing for any Church or creed. Intercourse with them did me no other good than to draw me farther away from Rome. I became bolder, and when again at home spoke my sentiments freely concerning the deceptions and delusions of the Roman Church.

CHAPTER VIII.

My regrets at being a priest—Immoral tendency of the confession of young ladies by young priests—My singular precautions—The jests of my fellow priests—My trouble in the administration of the sacraments.

From the day in which I felt that I was not an angel, and that my heart was attached to a person whom I was not permitted to love, much less to marry, a revolution was begun in my existence. Before this time my soul was full of limpid light. I enjoyed God, as I believed, with all the rapture of superstition. My peace and happiness were scarcely troubled. But now darkness, sadness, and chaos were to take the place of those former blessings. This love for a woman, instead of being, as it is intended by God, a source of happiness, was my torment. My heart began to rebel against the chains which bound me to the altar of superstition. Previously, my prayers or my imagination had made the soul mistress of the body, and hardly had I ever thought of woman. But since I encountered them in my ministry, above all, since I began to hear the confession of the young lady whom I could not help loving, Miss B., I felt a depression which I could not resist or dissipate. I remembered I was a priest, condemned by my celibacy to drive her image from my mind, and that I had raised an insuperable barrier between her and me.

This prohibition of loving her was sad and cruel; but there was no remedy; it was necessary that in my capacity of a priest I should turn the point of the dagger to my heart. The relations of a confessor and his penitent are so multiplied in our ministry that I was compelled to be many times with the object of my love and

my dread. This intercourse of young girls and young unmarried priests is the fulness of immorality; an occasion of glaring disorders or of the most cruel struggles. The obligation to attend to my duties at the confessional was the most fearful of all my functions, because I always dreaded to find there women in general, but especially this young lady. Indeed, had I been less attached to what I considered my duty as a priest, I would have had a great delight in speaking with her in those moments when she opened her heart and confessed her sins; but I was the slave of my position, and I thought it a mortal sin merely to think of her voluntarily. Before I went to the confessional, I never failed to fortify myself with all the arms of popish invention. I covered myself with scapulars and relics of the saints; I sprinkled myself with a great deal of holy water. I recited many prayers composed for occasions like this; I put on my surplice, and kissed it devoutly, because it is the emblem of our purity by its whiteness; and I said, "Indue me, domine, novum hominem qui secundum Deum, creatus est in justitia et sanctitate veritatis"—"Wrap me, O Lord, in the new man, who was created in the justice and holiness of truth." Afterwards I prostrated myself before a statue of the Virgin Mary, whom I had taken for my patroness on account of her purity; here, kneeling and groaning, I besought her humbly, with an unspeakable fervor, to protect me, to keep me spotless. Sometimes my preparations and prayers were so long that the people waiting, tired with my long delay, would go away; but the next day I must swallow the pill. In this manner, well fortified, strengthened, and armed with all the weapons from the papal arsenal, I went to the tribunal of penance. Be-

fore opening the wicket through which the words of confession were to come to me, I addressed to heaven a short aspiration to renew my strength; and then I found myself nearly in contact with the object of my dread. In this situation, separated from her only by a wicket, I was obliged to listen to her confession, to the most secret thoughts of a young lady whom I worshipped. Breathless I received her words. I heard the very pulsations of her heart. Each of her words was a drop of dew falling on a withered ground; or rather I should say, they were so many living coals. I can never tell all that I suffered at those moments.

She ceased speaking, and waited for my advice or observations. But I, beside myself, yet listened, plunged in reverie. At length, astonished at my silence, she would say, "Father, have you not heard me?" This title of father from her restored me to myself. I addressed my counsels to her with a trembling voice. She had so great confidence in me that I could turn her mind whichever way I wished. But heaven is my witness that I never spoke to her a word which I could not repeat before her mother; nevertheless I was convinced, beyond all doubt, of the great impropriety of such confessions, and the awful danger to the fair penitent if the confessor be wicked, and to himself if he be virtuous. When her confession was over I dismissed her. Sometimes when I was not able to master my imagination I drove pins into my body to prevent me from thinking of her. These confessions and these exertions harassed me in an incredible degree; and I left the confessional fatigued and exhausted. After reciting the "Te Deum," to thank God for my victory, I went home to be the object of the jests of my

fellow priests, who, by my wearied looks, surmised the cause of my uneasiness. "You are too scrupulous," said they to me, jesting with each other; "it is strange that you are not yet accustomed to the confession of women. Do not vex yourself so much about it; you are not an angel, but a man. If you are not wise, you will never be at ease; follow our example. Confession of young ladies is not a hard matter to us. Soon it will be easy to you also; have patience." In seeing them so careless about this terrible matter, so dreadful to me, I thought them great saints, dead to human weakness (for I did not understand the true meaning of their words), and I chafed and reproached myself for not being as holy as they were.

The days when I was to give her the holy communion were my worst days; and these were once or twice a week. At other times my relations with her were not so intimate. In the confession, for example, I was not obliged to see her or look at her, but at the holy table I must of necessity see her; therefore I was trembling while opening the tabernacle where the wafer is inclosed. It often occurred that in my struggles with myself, I lost the thread of my ideas, and forgot what I was to do; and I have sometimes shut up the tabernacle without having administered the sacrament. The boy who answered me perceived my distraction and reminded me that there was some one at the altar-railing; then my senses returned to me; but my agitation increased while going down the steps of the altar; and my hand trembled convulsively in taking the holy wafer and putting it upon her tongue. People seeing me in this agitation attributed it to the fear of God, whom I held in my hands; an opinion very useful to my fame for

piety, for each one said—"What a pious and holy priest! How deep is his faith in the real presence!"

Of all the functions of my ministry, that which I fulfilled the most willingly was the administration of the sacraments to dying people, and burials; because they brought before my eyes the picture of death, my only hope and desire. I panted after it as a prisoner longs for the day of his liberty, as an unhappy man for happiness. I watched those persons with delight, seeing death coming to take his prey and putting an end to their existence. I desired to be in their place, and delivered of this heavy burden. I fixed my eyes upon this work of destruction, and I started with secret hope. I followed the coffin to the grave, where each shovel of earth falling on the coffin went to my heart, and I found there an echo which delighted me. But God mocked at my earnest desire; I was riveted to life; I interrogated the tomb and death, and my voice resounding in the desert, returned to me unanswered.

On the contrary, I disliked the administration of the sacraments of baptism and marriage; because in the former I was thrown in contact with young god-mothers, and in the latter with young people who made me feel that I was a poor hermit. When in the baptistry I required, according to the rules, the god-fathers and god-mothers to place their hands upon the children; I was careful to keep my own hand the farthest from that of the god-mother. Sometimes, either by chance, or by trick or malice, mine met her's. I then suddenly withdrew it, and put it in another place, where it would be safer. On one of those occasions a pretty god-mother amused herself by inflicting this sort of torture on me. Three times in the space of a few minutes her

hand encountered mine, when it was each time suddenly withdrawn. I saw her smiling secretly, and it may be easily conceived how angry I was. The occasion of my avenging myself taking place, I took advantage of it. One or two months after this play of hers, which seemed to amuse her much more than me, she attended the marriage of one of her friends. I recognized my fair mischievous foe in the vestry, where, after the ceremony, everybody came to sign the register. All had written their names; she alone seemed inattentive. "Miss," said I to her in a serious tone, "you would be eager enough to sign your name if it were your own marriage." At this the whole company laughed at her. When going out she came near me, and said—"It is not right, sir; you avenge yourself; you remember the baptisms."

On another occasion the young lady I loved was to be a god-mother. At this intelligence I tried every means to avoid discharging this duty; but I was obliged to submit. At the baptistry I found myself facing this person, whom I feared quite as much as I loved. My head became dizzy; my embarrassment was visible. I did everything wrong. I was like one beside himself, whom reason has deserted. Thanks to the beadle, to the vestry-keeper, to the boys, I performed my office as well as I could. It is customary for god-fathers and god-mothers to present the priest with some pieces of gold or silver. This perquisite is a good income in the cities. According to this custom she gave me seven gold coins wrapped in a note, in which she told me that this money was to buy me a cloak; "It is," said she, "a feeble sign of gratitude for your good counsels in confession."

To wear a cloak given by so dear a hand would have been very agreeable to me; but it would have burned me as the poisoned robe of Dejanira burned Hercules. I answered her that I was grateful for her kindness, and should accept the gold provided she left me free to use it as I pleased. She assented, and I gave it to the poor.

Nothing was more painful to me than the performance of the marriage ceremony. It was the real punishment of Tantalus. On those occasions I felt more deeply what I had lost by my foolishness. I had before my eyes the picture of a happiness to which I could not aspire. Was it possible for me, in spite of all my fanaticism, piety and mysticism, to silence my heart, to stop its beatings? Was it possible for me not to feel my desolation?

After the ceremony I usually retired to pray, but the saddest reflections occupied my mind. I pictured to myself the happiness which might have been my lot had I not become a priest. I reflected that a life of enjoyment, of love, had been possible to me; that in this hour, so bitter to me, there were many happy couples enjoying in a mutual affection the greatest blessing in this world; sitting at their own table, or round their hearth, with their children about them; that had not man deceived me, I also might have known this happiness, while now the mere idea of it was considered a crime sufficient to cause the loss of my soul. Oh! how I was crushed when to each of these reflections I was obliged to answer—"Poor madman! of what dost thou think? Cease to devour thine own heart! Thou hast voluntarily shut thyself out from such a happy life; do not add poison to thy sorrows."

**"FATHER O'CONNOR'S LETTERS TO CARDINAL McCLOSKEY." FOURTH EDITION,
REVISED AND ENLARGED.**

The "Monthly Letter" of the Protestant Alliance of England and Scotland has an admirable review of this work, the following extracts from which will be read with interest:

LETTERS TO CARDINAL McCLOSKEY. By the Rev. James A. O'Connor. (Published at "THE CONVERTED CATHOLIC" Publishing Office, No. 60 Bible House, New York. Price, paper cover, 35 cents; cloth, one dollar.) The Rev. James A. O'Connor, the writer of these letters, was in 1871 duly ordained a priest of the Church of Rome, and for eight years labored in the ministry of that Church in the city of Chicago and other parts of Illinois, bravely working amongst the Irish Roman Catholic people of America, in the hope to secure their moral elevation, and to bring the influence of Christianity to bear upon their lives. His observation led him to see a lamentable lack of fruit in his ministry and in that of his brother priests. He gradually lost faith in the ceremonies and rites of the Church of Rome, and, recognizing that he was in a false position, he resolved at all hazards to free himself from a state which he found to be one of deplorable hypocrisy. Accordingly, leaving the Church of Rome, he went to Cincinnati in May, 1878, where he obtained literary employment. Subsequently he went to New York, and after his conversion to Christ, organized there the Reformed Catholic Church, in conjunction with other priests who had also renounced the teaching of the Church of Rome.

“Thanks be to God, through their instrumentality vast numbers are coming to hear preached to them the simple doctrine of salvation through Christ alone.” In these letters to Cardinal McCloskey, Father O'Connor powerfully exposes the deception and hypocrisy practised by the Roman Church; he points out her greed and avarice, her love of power, and the means adopted to hold her votaries in abject obedience to her sway. The sacraments, the means of grace, the hopes of heaven are all used by the Church of Rome to enforce her rule and to enhance her wealth. “All services of the priests in ministering to the people must be paid for in hard cash. There is no credit given for baptisms, marriages, dispensations, or masses; but the refinement of cruelty seems to have been reached by the infliction of the tax upon the biers of the loved ones departed to bring their souls out of purgatory.” Mr. O'Connor powerfully depicts the means used by the Romish priesthood to enhance the horrors of purgatory, and to wring from their hearers vast sums of money in payment of masses for the repose of the souls of departed friends or relatives, or to provide masses for the future release of the subscribers' souls from the pains and torments which they believe they themselves will have eventually to undergo. He exposes the unscriptural character of the doctrine of purgatory, its insufficiency and uncertainty, as taught by the Church of Rome, and he urges Roman Catholics to come to Christ in faith, with hearty sorrow and repentance, in the sure hope of an eternal union with God after this life is ended. He deals with the question of celibacy, enforced in the case of priests and nuns, leading to immorality and crime, and he refers to many instances

in which both priests and members of the religious orders have fled from the thralldom in which they were held, and have passed out into the world, at the risk of encountering even shame and the reproach of their nearest friends and relatives, feeling that "the hell they leave behind them is worse than anything that could be outside." Father O'Connor further refers to the degrading character of the Confessional, to the worship of the Virgin and saints, and the idolatrous sacrifice of the Mass, doctrines inculcated in Romish teaching. He examines fully the arguments adduced by the Romish theologians for the doctrine of Transubstantiation; he points out the absurdities involved in this belief, and conclusively proves its utter impossibility, and its direct contradiction to the teaching of Christ and of the Apostles. These letters to Cardinal McCloskey were originally published in the columns of the *New York Weekly Witness*. The editor of that paper writes that he has "reason to believe that they have been perused with deep interest by a large class of readers, including many Roman Catholic priests and laymen," and he expresses the hope, in which we cordially unite, "that they may enlighten many readers in the future, as they have done in the past, on the questions at issue between the Church of Rome and the Bible." Every Protestant and Romanist should read it.

The readers of the previous editions of these "Letters," will find this new edition a great improvement. Thirty-five pages of new matter have been added, making the volume a storehouse of information on the subjects it treats of. The price is 35 CENTS in paper covers, and ONE DOLLAR in handsome cloth binding. Address, James A. O'Connor, 60 Bible House, New York.





LITERARY NOTICE.

We had prepared for this number of the *CONVERTED CATHOLIC* a sketch of the "Life of St. Patrick," showing that the Christianity he preached to the Irish in the fifth century was not the religion that Rome gives them to-day; but the printer said there was no room for it unless he should be allowed to increase the size of the magazine one-half. How could this be done, with the fine quality of paper used, the excellent typographical work, and the low price charged? We increased the size without increasing the price in the December number, but the bills for paper and printing warned us against such extravagance in the future. We know it is only a question of time when this enlargement shall take place; it would occur next month if our subscribers would say so, and the sooner they say it the better. But to enlarge the magazine means an increase of price to One Dollar a year. Perhaps at the close of the present year we may be able to gratify our readers by this announcement. Of course all subscriptions received at the present rate will be filled until the time is expired. And, as we are on this subject, it may be as well to say now as at any other time that the *CONVERTED CATHOLIC* has passed its period of probation, and is a vigorous youngster standing squarely on its feet, to fight for the truth of God as long as health, grace and strength abide with the present Editor. No fear of failure now, thank God.

But as the "Life of St. Patrick" is crowded out for want of space, we commend to our readers the "History of the Irish Primitive Church, together with the Life of St. Patrick, and his Confession in Latin and English," by the Rev. Daniel De Vinne. The author was an Irish Roman Catholic who came to America in the first years of the present century. He was converted in early manhood and became a noted Methodist preacher. He was the oldest minister of his denomination when he died at the age of ninety-five in 1882. His "History" is a standard work on the early Christianity of Ireland, and throws much light on the general history of that country.

Since the author presented us with a copy in 1879, with many blessings on our efforts for the enlightenment and conversion of Roman Catholics, it has been in our hands for reference almost daily. Published by the Methodist Book Concern, 805 Broadway, New York. Sent by mail from this office. Price, bound in cloth, 75 cents.

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